



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Response to Mr. Uwe Mahrenholtz, OSCE Representative to the Estonian Commission on Military Pensioners**

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
June 8, 2006

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We would like to thank Captain Mahrenholtz for his detailed report on the work of the Commission and the status of military pensioners in Estonia. The United States appreciates your continued good rapport with both Estonian and Russian officials on this issue.

It is a testament to your hard work and the Commission's that the number of cases handled at each meeting has been continuously decreasing over the past few years.

We expect, the new Estonian Law on Aliens, which took effect on June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year, to further improve the situation of long-term residency permits for the military pensioners and their families.

As you have pointed out in your report, the new Law on Aliens does not foresee any role for the Commission on Military Pensioners. This means that the workload of the Commission will decrease rapidly in the next few months, until such a time when it ceases altogether.

In light of the forthcoming completion of the work of the Commission, it is necessary to discuss phasing out the role of the OSCE's Representative.

The United States looks forward to constructive discussion on this issue in the context of the 2007 program outline.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.